

FEBRUARY 2008

# INSIDE



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# ONE 2 ONE

WITH DIRECTOR NANCY RICHARDSON

**J**ust when my level of cynicism begins to rise, something always happens to restore my faith in humanity and my hope for the future. Such was the case a week ago.

I don't know about you, but the last couple of months of the political process have been both exciting and frustrating for me. As the Iowa caucuses approached, I was bombarded with mailings, commercials, debates, taped phone messages, and telephone surveys. Candidates and the race took over the media making it seem as though it was all I could hear or read about. They even "invaded" normal shows like Leno and Letterman.

Choosing a president is important business, so I understand all of the attention. I want to be an informed voter and want others to be so also, but I did get worn down by the sheer volume of contact and the substance, or lack thereof, sometimes. After a while it seemed like one big, long-term argument being played out in front of us. Ads turned negative; phone surveys were one-sided; speeches, forums, and debates seemed canned.

The result is I began to wonder about the value of this process and what it says about this country. Sometimes it seems like it all comes down to money – who has enough to win, who gave to whom, how candidates made theirs, who wants some from me! As you can see, cynicism crept into my thinking and I began to think both the process and the way we think in this country are out of whack. Then I had a conversation with Fawn.

I have a favorite Asian restaurant in Ankeny and Fawn is the owner/operator; I think she is a native of Cambodia. A couple weeks ago I found out she sold the restaurant and January 31 would be the last day (thanks, Jane Holtorf, for alerting me). Dinner January 30 was our last visit before the change. The place was packed and we waited for a table and our food but, as always, it was worth it. By the time we finished, the crowd had thinned and, as was not uncommon, Fawn came out from the kitchen to visit with customers.

She visited about her sadness and anxiety at having it come to an end, but said she got an offer too good to refuse. We asked what she was going to do now and if she was going to take some time off – she's a very hard worker and running a restaurant is a full-time job. She surprised us by saying

she was already considering opening a new place in Des Moines near the Capitol. She talked about her ideas for the new place and asked our advice about the location. And she shared that, even though it's a lot of work to be the owner, she just didn't think she could work for someone else and have her "regulars" come in and not find her signature items on the menu. She takes tremendous pride in the types and quality of things on the menu.

Finally, Fawn said that usually if you work hard you succeed, but that the worst that could happen is that she would fail at her new venture. "But, that's what is great about this country," she said. "If you fail at something you can just try again. You are always given another opportunity."

Just like that my cynicism melted away. I was reminded by that simple sentiment that, while the process of democracy may be messy and imperfect, and sometimes downright frustrating, the result – the freedom and opportunity to try and fail and try again, no matter the purpose – is pretty amazing.

I was also struck once again by how much we take for granted. It often takes someone not born into all the things we enjoy to help us realize how fortunate we are. So, I still find the ads, the

debates, and the arguing annoying, but when I apply the "Fawn Factor," they seem a small price to pay to help preserve our way of life.

Speaking of preserving our way of life, thanks to all you involved in winter road maintenance. What a winter! I am told that December was the second wettest, 39th coldest and ninth snowiest December in 121 years of recordkeeping and we've got the salt, fuel and overtime expenditures to prove it!

We've already used about a full winter's worth of salt (195,000 tons) and project we will end up between \$4 and \$6 million over budget in salt expenditures by winter's end. Fuel costs are about three times what they are in a typical winter and overtime worked is about twice what is normal. This all means our budget is very strained. But, there is no other single DOT activity that our customers rely on more than winter road maintenance.

So, keep up the great work. And let's all channel thoughts of a light late winter and an early spring.

*Nancy*

# Blouin joins Commission

The Iowa Transportation Commission welcomed its newest member Jan. 8, 2008, at its monthly meeting in Ames. Michael Thomas Blouin, a Democrat from Dubuque, was appointed by Governor Chet Culver to serve out a term that began Dec. 21, 2007, and will run until April 30, 2009. His appointment is subject to confirmation by the Iowa Senate. Blouin replaced Commissioner Thomas Hart.

Blouin joined the Greater Dubuque Development Corporation team as president in January 2007, where he is the primary contact for new business recruitment, and is responsible for executing a regional and national marketing strategy to build relationships with business leaders.

He was born on a Naval Air Base in Jacksonville, Fla., Nov. 7, 1945; and attended elementary and secondary schools in Miami Shores, Fla., and



Chicago, Ill. In 1966 he received a B.A. in political science from Loras College in Dubuque and taught elementary school in Dubuque.

Blouin served as a member of the Iowa House of Representatives, 1969-1973, and member of the Iowa Senate, 1973-1974. He was elected as a Democrat to the Ninety-fourth and Ninety-fifth Congresses (Jan. 3, 1975-Jan. 3, 1979) as a U.S. Representative for the 2nd District, State of Iowa.

He served as an assistant director for community action, Community Services Administration, 1980-1981; director of Resource Development and Government Relations, Kirkwood Community College, Cedar Rapids, 1981-1987; director of economic development, Cedar Rapids Chamber of Commerce, 1987-1991; president, Cedar Rapids Chamber of Commerce, 1993-1999; president and chief executive officer, Greater Des Moines Partnership, 1999-2003, where he led the consolidation of four former economic/community development groups into a single economic and community development organization; and director, Iowa Department of Economic Development, January 2003-July 2005. He was a candidate for the Democratic nomination for governor of the State of Iowa in 2006. Blouin was reappointed director of the Iowa Department of Economic Development, August 2006-January 2007.

Blouin and his wife, Suzanne, are the parents of adult twin daughters and have two grandsons.

## DOT pledges continued support of guard and reserves



Proudly hanging in the front foyer of the Iowa DOT's administration building is a signed, framed document that means a great deal to all DOTers in the military and their families. This document, a statement of support for the guard and reserve, was executed Nov. 9, 2007, by Director Nancy Richardson in a ceremony at

the State Historical Building in Des Moines. The event, sponsored by the National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, was designed to thank employers for their continued support.

Director Richardson joined directors of other Iowa state agencies and representatives of private companies in a public showing of support for the sacrifice of employees who serve in the guard and reserve and their families. The statement reads:

We recognize the National Guard and Reserve are essential to the strength of our nation and the well-being of our communities.

In the highest American tradition, the patriotic men and women of the Guard and Reserve serve voluntarily in an honorable and vital profession. They train to respond to their community and their country in time of need. They deserve the support of every segment of our society.

If these volunteer forces are to continue to serve our nation, increased public understanding is required of the essential role of the Guard and Reserve in preserving our national security.

Therefore, we join other employers in pledging that:

- Employment will not be denied because of service in the Guard or Reserve;
- Employee job and career opportunities will not be limited or reduced because of service in the Guard and Reserve;
- Employees will be granted leaves of absence for military service in the Guard and Reserve, consistent with existing laws; and
- This agreement and its resultant policies will be made known throughout our organization.



# Progress of DOT's archive project

Pulitzer Prize winning author David C. McCullough once wrote, "History is who we are and why we are the way we are." The DOT's surface transportation history archives project is moving forward in the quest to preserve the history of transportation in Iowa and how it has impacted Iowans. Hank Zaletel, DOT librarian, said, "These valuable resources have been collected since the earliest days of the Iowa Highway Commission. Many of the pieces don't exist anywhere else. Organizing and cataloging the information will preserve it for generations to come."

Until this project to sort, identify and archive the massive amount of historical photos and documents began three years ago, some historic documents were housed in the DOT library, while others were held in office files and other storage areas. While this information was being boxed and stored, it was not prepared in a way it could be accessed by Iowa DOT employees or anyone else who may be conducting research into the rich history of transportation in Iowa. Matt Donovan, archeologist in the Office of Location and Environment, said, "We have had no consistent way to share our past or document what we've accomplished as an organization."

There is a huge amount of historical information that we could be tapping into, either for our own purposes or to share with other states, if it were better organized and documented."

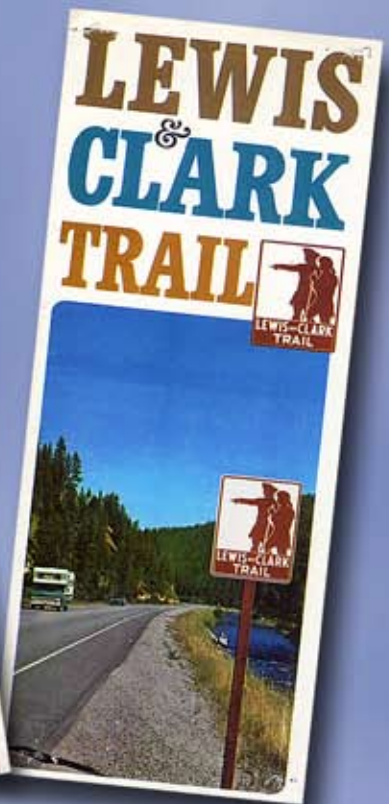
The Iowa DOT utilized \$50,000 from transportation enhancement funds to hire a consultant to develop a historical resource plan. In Phase 1 of the project, the consultant outlined options, recommendations, and guidelines for better managing the collection. The plan was completed in Dec. 2006 and is available on DOTNET. Zaletel said, "One thing we found during the plan development was that very few, maybe two or three, other DOTs around the country are attempting to organize their historical data. I don't think that is because other states aren't interested in preserving their history, they simply might not know where to begin. How we are going about organizing and cataloging our historical information could serve as a model for others."

In 2007 a DOT committee implemented a pilot project focusing on Iowa Highway Commission historic photos from the 1920s and 1930s and paper documents created for historic auto trails, such as the Jefferson Highway. Eventually the DOT Web site will be linked to the Iowa Digital Heritage Collection at <http://iowaheritage.lib.uiowa.edu>. This will help people find the collection more easily.

"Working with a committee of DOT employees from different offices has been a good experience," said Peggy Baer, director of the Office of Rail Transportation. "We each have a little different role and bring a different perspective. This is truly a cooperative effort that can bring the entire DOT together."

Phase 2 of the project began when two temporary employees were hired as archival technicians to sort the two collections, rehouse the photos in archival folders and provide index information for the photos. Employees in the electronic records management

*Here is a sample of what is included in the collection: hand-drawn artwork for the original Herbert Hoover Hiway logo, and brochures from the Custer Battlefield Highway and Lewis and Clark Trail.*



section of the Office of Document Services have been scanning the photos at appropriate resolutions for good quality copies and thumbnails for Internet display.

Phase 2 also included preparation of space to house the collection. An archive room was prepared with a cooling vent installed to help regulate the temperature and humidity. All road association correspondence and approximately 8,500 photos were surveyed and moved into the newly organized room that includes space for archival materials and supplies.

The Iowa Transportation Commission has recently approved the use of another \$50,000 in transportation enhancement funds to continue this work in 2008. The project's third phase will include completing the indexing of the primary Iowa Highway Commission photograph collection, digitizing selected historic auto trails materials to enhance the existing DOT Web site, <http://www.iowadot.gov/autotrails/indexauto.htm>, and digitizing select historic material. It is the committee's goal to have DOT's historical photos and maps identified, and selected ones made available to the public on the Internet by DOT's 100th birthday in 2013.

All DOTers are invited to view the progress of this project at an open house Wednesday, March 12, 2008, from 1:30 – 3 p.m. in the DOT library at the Ames complex.

#### **Committee members:**

Stuart Anderson, Systems Planning  
Keven Arrowsmith, Media and Marketing Services  
Peggy Baer, Rail Transportation  
Matt Donovan, Location and Environment  
Ed Engle, Research and Technology Bureau  
Dena Gray-Fisher, Media and Marketing Services  
Lori Fiscus, DOT library  
Mark Hansen, Transportation Data  
Gabe Henderson, DOT library  
Sandra Larson, Research and Technology Bureau  
Tessa Murphy, DOT library  
Kelly Popp, Document Services  
Libby Weilinga, Location and Environment  
Hank Zaletel, DOT library

## Research lunch and learn



### Research and Technology Bureau

A DRIVING FORCE OF INNOVATION

[www.dot.state.ia.us/research/index.htm](http://www.dot.state.ia.us/research/index.htm)



The Research and Technology Bureau is pleased to announce the second program in a series of seminars. Every month or two, staff plan to provide an opportunity for employees to see and hear about important

research being done for the Iowa DOT. The plan is to have researchers spend an hour presenting projects they have recently completed to give employees the chance to see how research results can be implemented in our daily work. Professional development hours (PDHs) are offered for these sessions, which can be used to meet some of the annual requirements for professional engineers.

The next seminar will be Feb. 18 from noon to 1 p.m. in the Materials conference room. Dr. David White from Iowa State University will present a program based on his project, "TR-531 Effective Shoulder Design and Maintenance." The seminar will also be available to field offices through Web casting. This will allow for real-time interaction in the seminar without having to travel to participate.

The following is an abstract of the research project that Dr. White will be presenting.

*Granular shoulders are an important element of the transportation system, and constantly subjected to performance problems due to wind- and water-induced erosion, rutting, edge drop-off, and slope irregularities. Such problems can directly affect drivers' safety and often require regular maintenance. The present research study was undertaken to investigate the factors contributing to these performance problems, and propose new ideas to design and maintain granular shoulders, while keeping ownership costs low.*

*This report includes observations made during a field reconnaissance study, findings from an effort to stabilize the granular and subgrade layer at six shoulder test sections, and the results of a laboratory box study where a shoulder section overlying a soft foundation layer was simulated. Based on the research described in this report, the following changes are proposed to the construction and maintenance methods for granular shoulders:*

- *A minimum California bearing ratio value for the granular and subgrade layer should be selected to alleviate edge drop-off and rutting formation.*
- *For those constructing new shoulder sections, the design charts provided in this report can be used as a rapid guide based on an allowable rut depth. The charts can also be used to predict the behavior of existing shoulders.*
- *In the case of existing shoulder sections overlying soft foundations, the use of geogrid or fly-ash stabilization proved to be an effective technique for mitigating shoulder rutting.*

If you have any questions, please contact Mark Dunn, [mark.dunn@dot.iowa.gov](mailto:mark.dunn@dot.iowa.gov) or 515-239-1447.



## Meet the DOT safety team

**P**rotecting and serving DOT employees through research and implementation of safety best practices and by offering safety training that is customized for DOT workers, that's the stated mission of the DOT's new safety team, housed in the Office of Employee Services (OES). The group will be engaging employees in the quest for safety and making every effort to mitigate the risk exposures that we all face. The team's partnering of worker's compensation and safety allows for a feedback loop to identify injury patterns, facilitate prevention and increase communication about safety issues within the entire organization.

### **Kris Oelmann, safety team support**

Oelmann has a variety of responsibilities in the OES. She schedules all National Highway Institute (NHI) and Performance and Development Solutions (PDS) training, as well as any safety training with outside training providers. She does this in addition to providing clerical support throughout OES.

### **Barb Mallon, employee safety coordinator**

Mallon has been the cornerstone of the DOT employee safety program for nearly 30 years. She will continue to serve as the DOT's in-house Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guru and safety resource, and you'll still be seeing her at some of your safety training sessions.

### **Leah Berbano, worker's compensation officer**

You may remember reading about Leah Berbano as a new DOT employee in the July 2007 issue of *INSIDE*. As the worker's compensation officer, Berbano supports the injured employee and employee's supervisor, and serves as an intermediary between Sedgwick, the third-party worker's compensation administrator, and the DOT. Berbano alerts the safety team to trends or reoccurring incidents, and then works with the team to identify solutions to prevent similar injuries.

### **Safety training specialist**

The Office of Employee Services will soon be hiring a safety training specialist, to be on board sometime in late February or early March. The training specialist will help develop and deliver safety programming for the entire DOT, along with the other team members.

### **Jim Peters, safety team leader**

Peters came to the DOT in December 2007. He worked as a paramedic for more than 25 years and studied occupational safety at Iowa State University. Peters says that after nearly 10,000 rides in an ambulance, he'd rather work to prevent injuries than to continue to treat them. Peters will spend considerable time in the field getting to know employees and the safety challenges facing DOT employees.



*The OES safety team - Leah Berbano (top), Barb Mallon (center) and Jim Peters (not pictured, Kris Oelmann)*

*Design Employee of the Year*

# Eric Weigel

**D**edication and innovation are two of the traits that earned Eric Weigel the nomination and selection as 2007 Office



of Design Employee of the Year. Weigel is a design technician specialist in the Office of Design automation

coordination (ODAC) group in the methods section. He spends his days developing automation tools designed to help users become more efficient and productive. Those tools reduce tasks that would have taken dozens of steps into a single mouse click, giving designers more time to focus on the actual design product rather than the process. Considering Weigel has developed literally hundreds of tools, the magnitude of his contribution becomes clear.

"My job is different every day," said Weigel. "I'm the type of person who likes a challenge and I get a lot of satisfaction in finding solutions that help other people in their work." The "other people" extend beyond the Office of Design. Many of the tools he has developed are used by designers in other offices, including Bridges and Structures, Traffic and Safety, Right of Way, and the districts. Weigel is the fifth member of this group to receive the Design Employee of the Year award, and said he felt "honored" and "humbled" to be recognized in this way by his peers.

“

***My job is different every day ... I'm the type of person who likes a challenge and I get a lot of satisfaction in finding solutions that help other people in their work.***

”

## Eric Weigel 2007 Office of Design Employee of the Year

His peers also appreciate his willingness to listen and the way he seeks input to help determine where to focus his improvement efforts. Deanna Maifield, supervisor of the methods section, said, "Weigel takes suggestions well, makes improvements when he can, and always tries to explain why some changes shouldn't be made. A job is much more difficult when you aren't able to just do what people ask of you because it will adversely affect others. He has made great efforts to ensure that all Office of Design staff understand the reasoning behind the process."

Another trait that stands out is Weigel's willingness to take initiative. He created an automation newsletter in an effort to improve communication with designers, and increase their knowledge and use of the tools developed in ODAC. He started setting the agenda for ODAC group meetings to make them more productive, and he actively seeks input from users on issues and concerns to identify new tools that may be useful. He also initiated training sessions to show employees how to use the new tools, as well as new features in the software.

According to Maifield, "You can often find someone who comes up with great new ideas, but these extras usually fall by the wayside when things get busy. I think it shows true dedication that Eric has continued his efforts for more than four years." That's because over the past four years the Highway Division has gone through two major updates to the design drafting software requiring Weigel to rewrite hundreds of applications both times. The latest version really tested his ingenuity because it represented a significant change in both the features and function of the software."

Michael Kennerly, director of the Office of Design, said, "What has always impressed me about Eric is his dedication to the small things, without losing sight of the big things."

Prior to his death, Wayne Mander was the team leader for ODAC and said of Weigel, "Even with his daily work duties, Eric is always looking for ways to improve the processes in the Office of Design and improve the employees within the office."

Weigel and his wife, Kandy, live in Boone with their daughter, Bailey, 9.

## Lots of little phish in a big pond

**S**o, you're scrolling through your E-mail one day and you see an "important" message from a bank. It happens to be a bank where you have a charge card. The E-mail is telling you that your account has been compromised and you should click on this link immediately to resolve the problem and restore your good name. "OK," you think to yourself, "can this be real?"

Probably not, says Deb Covington, the Iowa DOT information security officer. The scenario described above is most likely a "phishing" E-mail.

### **From Webopedia:**

Phishing - (fish'ing) (n.) The act of sending an E-mail to a user falsely claiming to be an established legitimate enterprise in an attempt to scam the user into surrendering private information that will be used for identity theft. The E-mail directs the user to visit a Web site where they are asked to update personal information, such as passwords and credit card, social security, and bank account numbers, that the legitimate organization already has. The Web site, however, is bogus and set up only to steal the user's information.

For example, 2003 saw the proliferation of a phishing scam in which users received E-mails supposedly from eBay claiming that the user's account was about to be suspended unless he clicked on the provided link and updated the credit card information that the genuine eBay already has. Because it is relatively simple to make a Web site look like a legitimate organization's site by mimicking the HTML code, the scam counted on people being tricked into thinking they were actually being contacted by eBay and were subsequently going to eBay's site to update their account information. By spamming large groups of people, the "phisher" counted on the E-mail being read by a percentage of people who actually had legitimate credit card numbers listed with eBay.

Phishing is also referred to as brand spoofing or carding. The term, "phishing," was coined as a variation on "fishing," the idea being that bait is thrown out with the hopes that, while most will ignore the bait, some will be tempted into biting.



### **Phishing E-mails will contain some of these common elements:**

1. The "From" field appears to be from the legitimate company mentioned in the E-mail. It is important to note, however, that it is very simple to change the "from" information in any E-mail client.
2. The E-mail will usually contain logos or images that have been taken from the Web site of the company mentioned in the scam E-mail.
3. The E-mail will usually contain a clickable link with text suggesting you use the inserted link to validate your information. Once you click on the link, you will see the real Web site address to which you will go. If the E-mail is phishy, the hyperlink does NOT point to the legitimate Web site URL.
4. Watch for logos that are not an exact match to the company's logo, spelling errors, percentage signs followed by numbers or @ signs within the hyperlink, random names or E-mail addresses in the body of the text, or even E-mail headers that have nothing to do with the company mentioned in the E-mail.

### **What to do with phishy E-mail in your DOT account**

The golden rule to avoid being phished is to never click the links within the text of the E-mail. At the Iowa DOT there is a folder set up to move these E-mails into for further investigation. Right click on the message in your inbox, choose "move to folder," expand the "public folders" file, then click on the "spam mail" folder. This moves the phishy message from your in-box to the spam folder where Information Technology Division staff can analyze and report the scam.



## What if there is really a problem with an account?

Those truly worried that an account may be in jeopardy can open a Web browser of choice, type the URL to the genuine Web site in the address field and log onto the Web site in the normal way (without going through the E-mail link as a quick route). This will provide the user with accurate information about the account and completely avoid the possibility of landing on a spoof Web site and giving personal information to someone who should not have it.

## The new phish - spear phishing

As with all malicious code, once a small percentage of the population starts to catch on, the perpetrators find ways to make the attack a little different and, in this case, make the phish harder to net. Iowa DOT staff have started to notice a newer phishing scam that focuses on a single user or a department within an organization. The phish appears to be legitimately addressed from someone within that company, in a position of trust, and requests information such as login IDs and passwords. Spear phishing scams will often appear to be from a company's own human resources or technical support divisions, and may ask employees to update their username and passwords. Once hackers get this data, they can gain entry into secured networks. Another type of spear phishing attack will ask users to click on a link that deploys spyware that can steal data. Move these phishy E-mails into the spam folder, just as you would any other spam.

### Phishing facts

- 6.1 billion - Number of phishing E-mails sent worldwide each month (*Anti-Phishing Working Group*)
- \$1,200 - Average loss to each person successfully phished (*Federal Trade Commission*)
- 15,451 - Number of unique phishing attacks in January 2006 (*Anti-Phishing Working Group*)
- 7,484 - Number of phishing Web sites found in January 2006 (*Anti-Phishing Working Group*)

### What is your phish IQ?

There are tests available on the Internet to test your phish IQ. Here are two sites with interesting tests.

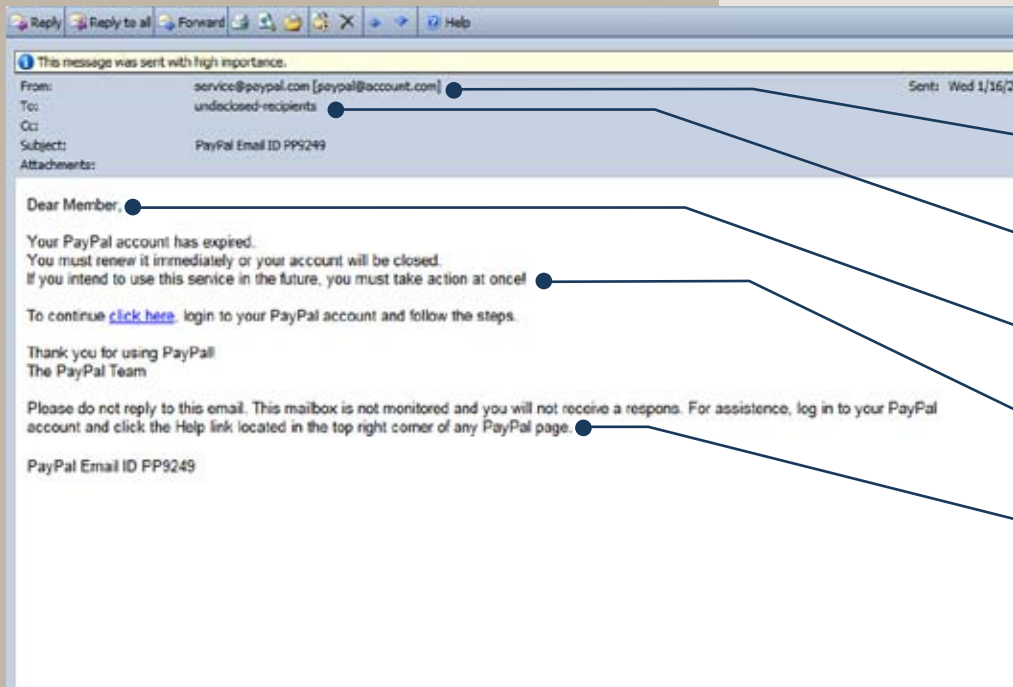
<http://www.sonicwall.com/phishing/index.html>

[http://www.mailfrontier.com/forms/msft\\_iq\\_test.html](http://www.mailfrontier.com/forms/msft_iq_test.html)

### Phishing IQ facts

- 755,000 - The number of people who have taken the sonicwall.com phishing IQ test worldwide
- 6.2% - The percentage of test takers who get 100% (correctly answering all 10 questions)
- 81% - The percentage of phishing E-mails identified as "phish" by the test takers
- 52% - The percentage of legitimate E-mails identified as "legitimate" by the test takers

(Information for the article adapted from [sonicwall.com](http://sonicwall.com), [webopedia.com](http://webopedia.com), [onguardonline.gov](http://onguardonline.gov), [computerworld.com](http://computerworld.com), [ftc.gov](http://ftc.gov) and [microsoft.com](http://microsoft.com).)



Clue: "From" address isn't PayPal (paypal@account.com)

Clue: Questionable content - why are you an undisclosed recipient?

Clue: It's not addressed to you - it's mass distributed

Clue: Urgently threatens your future ability to use the service

Clue: Only contact information leads back to questionable link in E-mail.

## Family happenings

### Driver Services

*Noralee Warrick*



**Rianna Lane**, driver's license examiner at the Ankeny DL station, and her husband, Wade, are the proud parents of a baby girl born Thursday, Dec. 13, 2007. Bianca K. Lane weighed 8 pounds, 5 ounces and was 20 inches long. Bianca's big brother, Austin, 3, was excited to meet her.

### District 6

*Sandi Byers*



**Randy Waterman**, construction technician senior, retired from the Manchester construction office Dec. 27, after 40 years of service. A coffee was held Dec. 18 at the Manchester office. The gathering of co-

workers and friends wished Randy well in his retirement and new endeavors. Randy's exceptional attitude and knowledge will be missed. Good luck, Randy.



On Dec. 13, 2007, **Al Aasen**, senior engineering technician in the District 6 Office, meandered into the sunset after more than 36 years with the Iowa DOT. A coffee held Dec. 12 at the District 6 Office brought out numerous co-workers and friends to wish Al well. Al and his wife, Deb, will be enjoying their new condo near Hunters Ridge Golf Course in Marion and hope to keep traveling. Al takes with him his wit, humor, knowledge, and know-how, but leaves a lot of friends. Thank you Al, good luck, and keep grinning!

### District 2

*Lu Mohorne*



**Steve Borcharding**, highway technician associate in the Latimer shop, and LaShell Miller were married Oct. 13, 2007. Congratulations to the happy couple.

### District 5

*Brenda Hadley*



*Johnny Thomas (left) receives his service award from Tony Sebben, Ottumwa highway maintenance supervisor*

**Johnny G. Thomas**, mechanic at the Ottumwa maintenance garage, retired Dec. 27, 2007, after 19 years of service. John began working for the DOT June 20, 1988, and worked as the mechanic in Ottumwa his entire career. The employees at the Ottumwa garage had a pizza luncheon and cake for him on his last day. John and his excellent mechanical skills will be missed!

*Continued next page*

## Family happenings, continued from previous page



District 5 hosted a retirement coffee Dec. 13 for retiring District Engineer **Larry Jackson**. Jackson, a 42-year veteran of the DOT, enjoyed a potluck lunch in his honor with district staff, his wife, daughter, son and their families. After lunch a steady stream of people came to wish Larry a happy retirement. Since he has given so many retirees "Gold Bricks" for their retirement, he was gifted with a number of "Gold Bricks," including one presented by his son and made using Larry's own mold and tools. Another reception was held for Larry in Ames. The entire district wishes the Jacksons a fun-filled retirement.



**Russ Smeltzer**, senior engineering technician in District 5, was honored Dec. 15 at a retirement coffee. Russ and his wife, Judy, treated co-workers to a chili and cornbread lunch prior to the reception. Russ' two daughters and their families joined their parents in greeting the many people who

came to wish Russ well. Among other things, Russ' co-workers gave him a book of suggestions for places to visit while traveling with Judy and their greyhound, Trent, in their fifth-wheel RV. Russ' last day with the department was Dec 28. Everyone at the district office will miss the wonderful stories Russ tells. Happy retirement!

## Construction Nancy McMennamin



**Harry J. Fortney**, engineering technician senior in the Office of Construction, retired Dec. 31, 2007, after more than 38 years of employment with the Iowa DOT. Harry started with the Iowa State Highway Commission in 1969. He had a very diverse career, including time in the Ames and Des Moines construction offices, District 1 survey crew, and the offices of Maintenance, Contracts and Construction. Harry has been involved with many important causes through his work with the employees union, and as an advocate for diversity in the workforce and disadvantaged business enterprises. A retirement party was held for Harry Dec. 19 in the Office of Construction with many co-workers, family, and friends in attendance. Congratulations, Harry!

## In memory



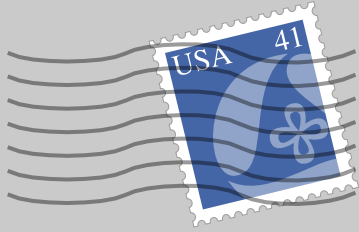
Joan E. (Stock) Scott, 75, formerly of Ames, died Thursday, Dec. 20, in Hot Springs, Ark. Scott was born Dec. 7, 1932, in Denison.

Her family moved to Ames in 1939, where she graduated from Ames High School in 1951. She worked for the Iowa DOT from 1954 to 1992. She married Gene Scott in 1983. They retired to Hot Springs in 1995, where she was active in the Hot Springs Women's Welcome Club and enjoyed playing bridge. She loved music and was proficient in playing the piano, and was a member of the church choir.

Ellen Kendall, 83, died on Tuesday, Oct. 23, 2007, at Mercy Hospital in Des Moines. Kendall was born May 30, 1924, to Carl and Bessie James in Osceola. She moved to Des Moines when she was 15 years old and graduated from East High School. Ellen married Eugene Kendall in 1942 and worked for the Iowa DOT's Office of Driver Services from 1959 to 1992. She was an active member of Our Ladies of the Americas - Visitation Site, working with the Rosary Society, funeral dinners, and other activities. Ellen is survived by her son, Jim (Mary Ann) Kendall of Indianapolis, Ind.; grandchildren, Todd Kendall residing in Italy and Holly (Brady) Whitney of Monrovia, Ind.; great-grandchildren, Kenzie and Clay Whitney; step-grandchildren, Lisa and Sean Frisby; and step-great granddaughter, Stella Grace Seymour. She was preceded in death by her husband, Eugene Kendall and her forever-cherished friend, Doris Beltrame.

*In memory, continued on page 15*





## Kudos!

*These are letters that have been submitted to the editor. They may have been edited for length and continuity.*

To: Iowa DOT  
From: Bob Molscan, Fort Collins, Colo.

I would like to commend every level of management, every road maintenance employee from driver to mechanic to secretary. You set the bar. I just had occasion to drive through Iowa during a winter storm. As a commercial driver, I see how all road crews in all states perform under the harshest conditions. You absolutely do an exceptional job. I can not say enough about how diligent your efforts to stay ahead of the curve on highway safety. This protects the public who seem to be their own worst enemy when dangerous conditions occur. This eases the hazardous job of the highway patrol. I crossed into Nebraska, which is flat and has no turns on I-80, and due to their poor highway road management, they had dozens of vehicles that flew off the roadway, and who knows how many patrol officers at risk dealing with the beloved private motorists and commercial drivers. Please call the Department of Transportation in Wyoming and tell them how it is done. They are going to host the Special Olympics again this year and need every bit of help they can possibly get.

To: Nancy Richardson, DOT director  
From: John Baldwin, Iowa Department of Corrections, Oakdale facility

The DOT folks next door to us have been immensely helpful to us during this bad weather. We have been trying to get a vehicle through state dispatch because the trucks we've used to plow and sand are giving out on us. During these icy days, the DOT trucks have come over to sand our road and parking lots. They've just been wonderful. We had thanked them earlier this year when they had allowed us to use their lot as overflow parking when we were bringing on our new employees.

(Editor's note: The DOT's Oakdale garage is located next to the Oakdale correctional facility in Iowa City.)

To: Ingrid Teboe, District 5 field services coordinator  
From: Ross and Sue Hill

### Note 1

We wanted to let you know that there is a section of the westbound lane of Iowa 22 west of Wellman that has a dip in the road. It is getting progressively worse, and with the icy conditions that we seem to be having this winter season, it could very well cause an accident.

### Note 2

We wish to thank the DOT maintenance crew for temporarily fixing that dip in such a timely fashion. It could have very well saved a life. We were so pleased when we saw the markings on the road one night and just a couple of nights later the dip was immensely improved. Keep up the great work. This winter seems to be testing us. We haven't had this much nasty weather in a long time.

(Editor's note: These notes were forwarded to the maintenance forces from the Washington shop.)

To: Sonya Willis, Office of Driver Services  
From: Phil Petzen, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

I went to the new driver's license station in Ankeny recently. In total, I talked to or interacted with five individuals. They were uniformly friendly, competent and professional. The attitude was across the board from the officer at the intake desk (first stop) to the young man who served as the photographer (last stop). I was given a one-page form to complete, sat down and did not even get half-way through it before my number was called. This is a very impressive operation, and an excellent cadre of personnel. The person helping me was in training, yet she handled my license renewal like a seasoned professional. I am sure you hear about it when facilities or individuals don't live up to people's expectations, but I felt that you needed to know about my experience. Please extend my thanks to the folks that you have hired, trained and placed at this site.

## Toys for Tots wrap-up



Central Iowa kids had a merrier Christmas this year thanks to employees in the central complex and Motor Vehicle Division. Here's a rundown of the donations collected for each central complex event.

Soup lunch .....	\$763.00
Parking spots (auctioned with 2007 food drive) .....	1,154.00
Personal donations.....	1,056.90
Bake sale.....	344.30
Sub sandwiches.....	810.00
Ornament/popcorn sale.....	292.70
Caramel/cinnamon roll sale .....	322.00
Auction .....	3,644.05
<b>Total cash.....</b>	<b>\$8,386.95</b>
<b>Number of toys donated .....</b>	<b>212</b>

Toys collected in the Ames area were taken by the Marine Corps to United Way in Ames for local distribution. The Motor Vehicle Division donated \$3,012 and 60 toys for the Des Moines area. Events included a cookie sale, photos with Santa, rummage sale, sub sandwich lunch, Iowa/Iowa State chili touchdown lunch, silent auction, coffee and doughnuts, and a salad bar lunch.

Director Nancy Richardson said, "Every year DOT employees use their resources and find innovative ways to help those less fortunate. I'm so proud to be part of an organization where employees continually express a truly caring and compassionate attitude."

## One Gift exceeds 2008 pledge goal

State of Iowa employees once again showed their caring side by participating in the 2008 One Gift campaign. DOT employees pledged \$48,745, that's 16 percent more than the \$42,000 goal! Total campaign pledges of \$583,784 exceeded the 2008 goal of \$517,562 by \$66,222 or nearly 13 percent. Governor Chet Culver, in a letter to Operations and Finance Director Lee Wilkinson, said, "We are very proud of all of our employees who demonstrate their compassion and generosity for the benefit of the charitable organizations of Iowa."

To: Iowa DOT  
From: Kay Konrardy, Waterloo

I am just letting you know how appreciative we were of your DOT snowplow drivers throughout Iowa today, Tuesday, Dec. 11. We traveled Monday night to attend a funeral today in Avoca (I-80E from Avoca to I-35N to U.S. 20 to Waterloo). Due to our work schedules we had to be back home tonight. As soon as we were able to leave the funeral we started out. Was it the best travel day? No, but your workers worked hard to make our travel easier. I just wanted to let you know how appreciative we were of them.

To: John Selmer, District 4 engineer  
From: Barry Cleaveland, Iowa Transportation Commissioner

I am writing to you to pass along a set of three compliments I received unsolicited from my co-workers here at SilverStone. One was from an Iowan who works here in the Omaha office with me, and the other two are from Nebraskans who have recently visited relatives in Iowa. All the compliments are the same- "What a great job Iowa does in keeping its roads clear of ice and snow during and after the recent storms!" I told them I would pass along the compliment to the appropriate parties as they needed to hear that their work was truly appreciated and noted.

To: Iowa DOT  
From: Pam Decker, Chariton

Thank you all so very much for all the hard work and hours you put in keeping our roads safe. You are so very appreciated.

## Personnel updates

Information supplied by the Office of Employee Services for Nov. 16 to Dec. 13, 2007

### New hires

**Roman Bell**, construction technician assistant, Design; **Douglas Carlson**, mechanic, Urbana garage; **Tyler Chiri**, driver's license clerk, Ankeny DL station; **Bryan Conrad**, motor vehicle officer, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Michaele Cooper**, driver's license clerk, Ankeny DL station; **Gregory Duda**, information technology specialist 4, Information Technology Division; **Bryan Hoffmann**, driver's license examiner, Dubuque DL station; **Aaron Ilvess**, driver's license clerk, Ankeny DL station; **Kory Lindell**, highway technician associate, Mount Pleasant garage; **Jeff Oppedahl**, construction technician assistant, Design; **Carol Payne**, driver's license clerk, Ames DL station; **James Peters**, executive officer 2, Employee Services; **Sarah Skelton**, driver's license clerk, Ankeny DL station; **Jeffrey Stratton**, highway technician associate, Oakdale garage; **Danna Thompson**, motor vehicle officer, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Jeffrey Uhlenhopp**, highway technician associate, Decorah garage; **Tammy Wright**, driver's license clerk, Sioux City DL station; **Regan Young**, mechanic, Shenandoah garage

### Promotions

**Kie Ahrens**, highway technician associate to highway technician, Sioux City - Leeds garage; **James Albers**, highway technician associate to highway technician, Correctionville garage; **Randy Beaver**, highway technician associate to highway technician, Sioux City - Leeds garage; **Michael Bennett**, from design technician to design technician specialist, Design; **William Boles**, highway technician associate to highway technician, Spirit Lake garage; **Jeffrey Buchheit**, from construction technician assistant, District 6 Office to construction technician senior, Manchester construction; **Michael Casey**, highway technician associate, Council Bluffs - South garage to highway technician, Rockwell City garage; **Garry Gengler**, highway technician associate to highway technician, Le Mars garage; **Donald Gomez**, highway technician associate, Onawa garage to highway technician, Sioux City - Hamilton garage; **Roy Guyer**, highway technician associate, Avoca garage to highway technician, Atlantic garage; **William Henrichs**, highway technician associate, Rock Rapids garage to highway

technician, Ashton garage; **Tracy Hodges**, driver's license examiner to driver's license supervisor 1, Iowa City DL station; **Barton Hofeldt**, highway technician associate to highway technician, Davenport garage; **Carmen Homrighausen**, highway technician associate to highway technician, Tipton garage; **Doyle Jacobs**, highway technician associate to garage operations assistant, Martensdale garage; **Edward Launderville**, highway technician associate to highway technician, Denison garage; **Rebecca Law**, design technician associate, Right of Way to transportation planner 1, Systems Planning; **Bart Lodge**, from highway technician associate to equipment operator senior, Allison garage; **Salvador Lopez**, highway technician associate to highway technician, Davenport garage; **J. Brian Morrissey**, from transportation engineer executive, District 4 Office to public service executive 6, District 5 Office; **Robert Mycka**, highway technician associate to highway technician, Sioux City - Hamilton garage; **Steven Parker**, from construction technician to construction technician senior, Sioux City construction; **Christine Roth**, from public service supervisor 2 to driver's license hearing officer, Driver Services; **Jason Schroeder**, highway technician associate to highway technician, Davenport garage; **Joseph Schupanitz**, highway technician associate to highway technician, Cedar Rapids garage; **Dean Schwenke**, highway technician associate to highway technician, Atlantic garage; **Steven Scott**, from equipment operator senior, Williams garage to highway maintenance supervisor, Chariton garage; **Donald Sharr**, from driver's license examiner, Ankeny DL station to motor vehicle officer, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Richard Starks**, highway technician associate to highway technician, Marion garage; **S. Sinclair Stolle**, from transportation engineer, Design to transportation engineer specialist, Des Moines construction

### Transfers

**Glenn Hansen**, from mechanic to highway technician, Onawa garage; **Glen Lyall**, information technology specialist 3, within Information Technology Division; **Jimmy Pitts**, highway technician associate, from Carlisle garage to Albia garage; **Courtney Timm**, highway technician associate, from

Malcom garage to Tama garage; **Cynthia Watkins**, driver's license clerk, from Davenport DL station to Clinton DL station

### Retirements

**Gary Biggs**, highway technician associate, Fort Dodge garage; **Carolyn Boon**, secretary 1, Procurement and Distribution; **Lloyd Gruis**, highway technician associate, Rock Rapids garage; **Jerry Gunderson**, highway technician associate, Osage garage; **Larry Jackson**, public service executive 6, District 5 Office; **Stephen Kling**, construction technician, Council Bluffs construction

*(Editor's note: Due to an oversight by the editor, the retirements of two Office of Motor Carrier Services employees were not included in previous issues of INSIDE. Jeanne Fuller, clerk specialist, retired June 28 and Connie Warmbier, clerk specialist, retired Sept. 26. We apologize for the error.)*

*I'd like to solve the puzzle!*



Cory "Ace" Van Sickle, son of Ames Highway Maintenance Supervisor Jim Van Sickle, made an appearance on Wheel of Fortune Jan. 14. Although Cory didn't win the most money on the episode, he did finish in second place, coming home with \$7,900.



## Service awards

Information supplied by the Office of Employee Services for February 2008

### 35 Years

**John Berry**, Urbana garage

### 30 Years

**Kenneth Cameron**, Finance; **Larry Hopp**, Williamsburg garage; **Gary Kohrs**, Independence garage; **Jeffery McQueen**, Sidney garage; **Laura Tucci**, Driver Services

### 25 Years

**Monty Shuey**, Information Technology Division

### 20 Years

**Melody Aswegan**, Driver Services; **Brenda Boell**, Local Systems; **Daniel Clawson**, Sigourney garage; **Rebecca Hanson**, Materials; **Gregory Perkins**, Oskaloosa garage; **Kelly Popp**, Document Services; **Marlyn Struecker**, Algona garage; **Barney Thomsen**, Sigourney garage; **Daniel Weber**, De Witt garage; **Barbara Weigel**, Information Technology Division

### 15 Years

**Gregory Fratzke**, Independence garage; **Chris Grimm**, Grimes garage; **Paul Radmaker**, Emmetsburg garage; **Khashi Reyes**, Des Moines - north garage; **Mark Turkal**, Oakdale garage; **Kevin Uthoff**, Urbana garage; **Michael Willis**, Driver Services

### 10 Years

**Troy Clouse**, Denison garage; **Brian Smith**, Chariton construction

### 5 Years

**Marybeth Banta**, District 3 Office; **Dwaine Berte**, Algona garage; **Jeremy Blue**, Chariton garage; **Jeanne Bornand**, Finance; **Alex Crosgrrove**, District 3 materials; **Myron Fox**, Design; **Patrick Hayes**, Decorah garage; **William Lane**, Highway Division Highway Helper; **Milly Ortiz**, Systems Planning; **Hugh Payne**, District 3 materials; **Richard Pross**, District 4 Office

### In memory, continued from page 11

Joseph W. Demeter, 75, of Mount Pleasant, died Jan. 8, 2008, at University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics in Iowa City. He was the retired resident construction engineer in the Mount Pleasant construction office. Survivors include his wife, Theresa, of Mount Pleasant, and daughter, Helen Bailey, who works for the District 5 materials office in Fairfield.

Richard C. Bell, 70, of Ottumwa, died Jan. 12, 2008, at Ottumwa Regional Health Center. He worked 36 years for the Iowa DOT, retiring from the Ottumwa construction office in 1996. He was a member of Plymouth Congregational Church, where he sang in the choir. He had also been a member of the Wapello Chiefs Barbershop Chorus. Survivors include his wife, Virginia; sons Mark and Jason; a daughter, Jennifer Thompson; a stepdaughter, Debra Aubrey; stepsons David Farnsworth and Douglas Farnsworth; nine grandchildren; and a brother, Stephen.



INSIDE is developed to help keep all Iowa DOT employees informed about critical issues affecting them, recognize DOT employees for their excellent service and share interesting aspects in the lives of our co-workers. For more information contact Tracey Bramble, Office of Media and Marketing Services, at 515-239-1314 or e-mail tracey.bramble@dot.iowa.gov.

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**PLEASE RECYCLE THIS ISSUE**

On the cover: Spring will be here soon!

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District 3 .....	<b>Mary Beth Banta</b> , Sioux City .....	712-276-1451
District 4 .....	<b>Marlene Jensen</b> , Atlantic .....	712-243-3355
District 5 .....	<b>Brenda Hadley</b> , Fairfield .....	641-472-6142
District 6 .....	<b>Sandi Byers</b> , Cedar Rapids .....	319-364-0235
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General Counsel .....	<b>Chris Crow</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1509
Information Technology Division .....	<b>Colette Simpson</b> , Ames .....	515-233-7728
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Planning, Programming and Modal Division .....	<b>Mary Kay Reimers</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1661
Motor Carrier Services .....	<b>Diann McMillen</b> , Ankeny .....	515-237-3250
Motor Vehicle Enforcement .....	<b>Kerry Kirkpatrick</b> , Ankeny .....	515-237-3260
Operations and Finance Division .....	<b>Sheri Anderson</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1340
Research and Technology Bureau .....	<b>Phyllis Geer</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1646
Right-of-Way .....	<b>Linda Kriegel</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1135
Traffic and Safety .....	<b>Linda McBride</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1557
Vehicle Services .....	<b>Thelma Huffman</b> , Ankeny .....	515-237-3182

# Iowa E-filers tops in the country

**N**early 980,000 of 1.4 million Iowa taxpayers filed their income tax returns electronically last year; that's more than 69 percent. According to Renee Mulvey in the Department of Revenue (IDR), that makes Iowa first in the nation in percentage of online filers. The popularity of e-filing continues to grow for a variety of reasons.

**E-filing is safe.** Tax information is transmitted from one secure computer system to another with little, if any, interference.

**E-filing is accurate.** E-filed returns have significantly fewer errors than paper. Correcting errors in e-filed returns is fast. A paper return with errors can take up to six months to correct.

**E-filing is fast.** Refunds are in taxpayers' hands in less than two weeks instead of six weeks. Direct deposit cuts additional days and gives the fastest refund. Approximately 67 percent of Iowa taxpayers receive refunds.

**E-filing is easy.** Most taxpayers e-file through their tax preparers. Others do it themselves with purchased or online software.

Check your e-file options on the IDR's Web site at [www.state.ia.us/tax](http://www.state.ia.us/tax). Some DOT employees will qualify for free E-filing of both the Federal and Iowa returns. The qualifications include:

- Age 25 or younger or
- Age 65 or older or
- Served active duty military including reservists, National Guard and Coast Guard or
- Able to claim Earned Income Tax Credit or
- Income of less than \$30,000 or
- Income of less than \$54,000 and less than 50 years old

Taxpayers need to go to the IDR Web site (not the IRS' site!) to file both returns free: [www.state.ia.us/tax](http://www.state.ia.us/tax). Those who do not qualify for free E-filing can e-file both state and federal returns for as little as \$12.95.

## And if you owe additional Iowa tax...

Use the E-pay feature to pay your balance due. From the IDR's Web site, follow the E-file and E-pay links to make an individual income tax E-payment (direct debit). If you file early, you may schedule your payment to be made on April 30, 2008, Iowa's due date.

## Estimated income tax payments

If you make estimated income tax payments, you may use E-pay not only to pay, but also to schedule payments in advance.

## Questions about E-filing?

If you have questions about electronic filing or the electronic payment process, contact the IDR E-file service unit at 515-281-8453 or 866-503-3453, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.

## Questions about Iowa tax law?

To talk to a tax specialist call 800-367-3388 or E-mail [idr@iowa.gov](mailto:idr@iowa.gov). Staff is available Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. until 4:15 p.m.

